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ABSTRACT

Examining the academic library within a contextual framework (of colleges, universities, and U.S. society), this book provides an analysis of the institution's content and function. The work emphasizes the structure, organization, decision making, and operations of academic libraries. The history, organization, and cultures of the academic environment are surveyed, as well as the communities served by the academic library and the university. It reviews the role of the academic librarian, the governance, administration, and financial operations of the library, and the library collection. Special attention is given to processes of scholarly communication (print and electronic) and the library's effort to provide information to the academic community. The book concludes with a glimpse into the future possibilities and realities of distance education, copyright issues, academic library services, and other current trends. Throughout the text, each topic is considered in light of the dynamism and complexity of an environment that is shaped by the continuous entry and departure of students, faculty, and administrators and by institutional and administrative changes. Of necessity, the analysis includes political and social as well as intellectual forces that operate in higher education. (AEF)

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